

Message Text

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ACTION SS-20

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 PRS-01 A-01 OC-06 CCO-00 ABF-01

SY-04 NSC-07 USSS-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 DRC-01 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1584

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FOR S/S-EX

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.), SY

SUBJ: SECSTATE VISIT: ADMIN/LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

REF: STATE 214690

1. WAIVERS FOR VISAS AND CONSOLIDATED IMMIGRATIONS/
CUSTOMS CLEARANCES BEING REQUESTED. WILL ADVISE
LATER.

2. CONTROL OFFICER KAREN JENKINS HAS VISITED DAMASCUS MANY
TIMES BEFORE SO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE DIRECTED
TO HER.

3. A. OFFICE SPACE. WE CAN SET UP BOTH SECRETARY'S
SPECIAL ASSISTANT'S OFFICE AND S/S OFFICE IN CHANCERY.
SARG HAS ALREADY OFFERED GUEST HOUSE FOR REST STOP ENROUTE
PRESIDENCY. DO YOU PREFER USE GUEST HOUSE FOR SPECIAL
ASSITANTS, AS IN PAST, RATHER THAN HOUSING THEM IN
CHANCERY AS PER REFTTEL?

B) GROUND TRANSPORTATION. IF PAST EXPERIENCE PROVES TRUE,
GOES WILL BE PROVIDING MAJOR TRANSPORTATION AND EMBASSY WILL
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DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO BRIEF THEM THOROUGHLY.

C) HOTEL ROOMS. GIVEN BREVITY OF VISIT (ETA 1100 LOCAL - ETD 2000 LOCAL, DOES S/S-EX FORESEE NEED OF HOTEL ROOMS FOR ANY OF OFFICIAL PARTY OR OTHERS TRAVELLING WITH SECSTATE AIRCRAFT? REGARDING AIRCREW, WE AWAIT DOD MESSAGE WHICH SHOULD OUTLINE THEIR REQUIREMENTS AT THIS STOP.

D) COURIERS.NEED OF COURIERS DEPENDS ON YOUR DECISION RE GUEST HOUSE VS. CHANCERY.

4. UNDER REFTTEL MISCELLANEOUS (PARA 13), THE FOLLOWING ARE INITIAL OBSERVATIONS. OTHER OBSERVATIONS WILL BE SENT ASAP. A) PASSING OF IDLE TIME FOR THIS VISIT WILL PROVE DIFFICULT. PARTY IS ARRIVING ON FRIDAY, THE TRADITIONAL DAY OF REST, AND DEPARTING THE SAME DAY. THIS PRECLUDES MOST SHOPPING SINCE SUQ CLOSED ON FRIDAY. SIGHTSEEING: OMAAYAD MOSQUE WILL BE FILLED WITH FAITHFUL FROM NOON TO SUNSET MAKING SIGHTSEEING INADVISABLE. VISITS TO AZEM PALACE AND MUSEUM STILL POSSIBLE.

B) LOCAL CUSTOMS. AT PRESENT AND UNTIL AROUND 16 OCTOBER ALL ISLAMIC COUNTRIES ARE OBSERVING QTE RAMADAN UNQTE. THIS IS THE PERIOD WHEN ALL DEVOUT MUSLIMS FAST FROM SUNRISE UNTIL SUNSET. FAST INCLUDES ABSTINANCE FROM EATING, DRINKING, AND SMOKING. IN HOTEL RESTAURANT OR ROOMS ONE MAY DRINK, EAT, AND SMOKE BUT AS SIGN OF RESPECT ALL PERSONS VISITING DAMASCUS SHOULD REFRAIN FROM EATING, DRINKING, OR SMOKING IN PUBLIC STREETS, ETC.

C) ELECTRICITY. DAMASCUS ELECTRICITY IS 110 VOLT 50 RPT 50 CYCLE.

D) WEATHER HERE IS NOW COMFORTABLE. HIGH IS AROUND 77 DEGREES F DURING DAY AND LOW DROPS TO AROUND 55DEGREES F IN THE EVENING. HAVING A SWEATER OR LIGHT COAT IS ADVISABLE AFTER THE SUN GOES DOWN. MURPHY

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